IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1 and 9, and cancel claims 2, 5-8, 10 and 13-16 without prejudice as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A network of switches comprising:

a first switch having a first memory interface and a first expansion port;

a first memory coupled to the first switch with a first memory bus;

an expansion bus having a first expansion bus interface and a second expansion bus interface, said first expansion bus interface connected to said first expansion port;

a second switch having a second memory interface and a second expansion port, said second expansion port connected to said second expansion bus interface, thereby connecting said first switch to said second switch; and

a second memory coupled to the second switch with a second memory bus,

wherein said expansion bus allows said first switch to directly access said second memory interface through said second switch and said second switch to directly access said first memory interface through said first switch to increase a bandwidth of a read/write operation to the first memory and the second memory,

wherein said first expansion port further comprises a first proxy component that when activated allows data packets to be directly read from said first memory and directly written to said first memory by said second switch through said expansion bus, and wherein said second expansion port further comprises a second proxy component that

when activated allows data packets to be directly read from said second memory and directly written to said second memory by said first switch through said expansion bus.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The network of switch as recited in claim 1 wherein said first memory interface is configured to be connected to the first memory and said second memory interface is configured to be connected to the second memory.

4. (Original) The network of switches as recited in claim 1 further comprising a command bus connected between said first switch and said second switch allowing commands to be communicated between said first switch and said second switch.

5 – 8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A system of network of switches, said system comprising:

a first switch having a first memory and a first expansion port;

an expansion bus having a first expansion bus end and a second expansion bus end, said first expansion bus end connected to said first expansion port; and

a second switch having a second memory and a second expansion port, said second expansion port connected to said second expansion bus end, thereby connecting said first switch to said second switch, wherein said expansion bus allows said first

switch to directly access said second memory through said second switch and said second

switch to directly access said first memory through said first switch to increase a

bandwidth of a read/write operation to the first memory and the second memory,

wherein said first expansion port further comprises a first proxy component that

when activated allows data packets to be directly read from said first memory and

directly written to said first memory by said second switch through said expansion bus,

and wherein said second expansion port further comprises a second proxy component that

when activated allows data packets to be directly read from said second memory and

directly written to said second memory by said first switch through said expansion bus.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Original) The system of network switches as recited in claim 9, wherein said

first memory is external memory and said second memory is external memory.

12. (Original) The system of network switches as recited in claim 9 further

comprising a command bus connected between said first switch and said second switch

allowing commands to be communicated between said first switch and said second

switch.

13. – 16. (Cancelled)